FLORES ISLAND PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Approved by:

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Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Flores Island Park is to protect the natural values associated with the temperate rainforest on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Much of this type of forest has been developed through forestry and is no longer in its natural state. The park protects three undisturbed watersheds with old growth stands of Sitka spruce, and habitat of numerous rare and endangered species including spawning habitat for a genetically distinct population of coho salmon.

By protecting the coastal fringe, the park makes a small contribution to protecting examples of two under-represented biogeoclimatic variants -- Coastal Western Hemlock vm1 and vm2. It also contributes to the protection of the Coastal Western Hemlock vh1 variant and the Windward Island Mountains Ecosection (WIM), which are both well represented in the protected areas system.

In addition, with 2,969 hectares of foreshore, Flores Island Park protects representative coastal and marine ecosystems including excellent spawning conditions for salmon, exposed rocky coasts, sandstone reefs, eelgrass and kelp beds, beaches, sheltered channels and bays, fast narrows, mudflats and shallow banks. These habitats are exceptional for marine mammals, resident and migrating birds, and intertidal/subtidal marine organisms.

Flores Island Park contributes to protecting the Vancouver Island Shelf *Marine* Ecosection (VIS), which is poorly represented in the protected areas system at 5.4%.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role is to provide a recreation opportunity for kayakers and other boaters who are looking for a remote and wilderness coastal experience. Clayoquot Sound is a popular destination area for boaters, particularly kayakers who are seeking the remote natural setting of the west coast with sandy beaches and undisturbed forests. Together with Maquinna and Vargas Island parks, Flores Island Park and nearby Gibson Marine Park provide popular destinations with their beaches for camping and small islets for exploring. Flores Island Park provides a stopping point for visitors enroute to or from Hot Springs Cove and other protected areas. Seasonally resident gray whales feeding in Cow Bay offer a unique viewing opportunity. Hiking on both the coast and in the old growth Sitka spruce forest by way of the Ahousat Wild Side Heritage Trail makes this park distinctive. Wilderness camping is allowed but there are no developed facilities at Flores Island Park.

Tertiary Role
The **tertiary** role is to protect cultural features. Clayoquot Sound has a vibrant First Nations heritage, both past and present. Beaches were popular gathering and village sites and are found in many of the protected areas in Clayoquot Sound. The park is rich in First Nations sites and post-contact sites that capture glimpses of the past. Post-contact history includes union steamship by the Royal Navy as well as farming and settlement patterns of the Gibson family.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Residential trespasses in the park	➢ Develop strategy to remove trespasses. ➢ Restore and rehabilitate site.
Access to trail – crossing private land	➢ Work with Ahousaht First Nation and private owners to complete trail access.
Impacts on park values as a result of increased level of use by kayak campers – site degradation, habituation of wildlife, impacts on cultural sites	➢ Develop recreation plan (for all Clayoquot Sound protected areas) to develop strategy for visitor facilities and public information on appropriate behaviours. Work with First Nations where appropriate. ➢ Undertake an ecosystem management plan. ➢ Consider restrictions in visitor numbers to maintain a high quality experience.
Increasing commercial wildlife viewing activity and its effect on wildlife	➢ Develop wildlife viewing guidelines in conjunction with commercial operators. ➢ Consider initiating a permit system for whale watching tour companies.
Relationships with First Nations and pending treaty settlements	➢ Develop good working relationships with First Nations to develop an understanding and appreciation of protected area status and park values. ➢ Liaise with Central Region Board (CRB) to inform them of management issues in the park.
Participation in Biosphere Reserve	➢ Work with Biosphere Foundation and CRB to ensure the Environmental Stewardship Division's perspective is taken into account in Biosphere activities and projects.
Extraction of marine resources from commercial harvesting	➢ Work with DFO on commercial fishery closures.
Lack of awareness of cultural and natural values	➢ In conjunction with First Nations, develop interpretative information on park values and appropriate behaviour.
Development of surrounding forest lands and impacts on park values and scenic values	➢ Work with Ministry of Forests and industry to ensure protection of park values and visual resources.

Zoning

Natural Environment Zone – covers the entire park (7,113.3 ha). The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Flores Island Park makes a small contribution of 1.9% to the well-represented Windward Island Mountains Ecosection (17.4%) It also contributes 3.3% to the protection of the Vancouver Island Shelf *Marine* Ecosection (VIS), which is poorly protected in the protected areas system at 5.4%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Flores Island Park contributes minimally (0.46%) to the representation of the under-represented CWHvm1, which has only 7.01% protected provincially. It also makes a very minimal contribution of 0.02% to CWHvm2, which has only 8.72% protected. However, the park's contribution is important as it protects old growth remnants of these highly modified ecosystems. It also contributes 3.7% to the protection of CWHvh1 which is well represented in the protected area system at 19.3%.
Special Feature	☒	Old growth Sitka spruce, bats, gray whale feeding and foraging grounds
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	*Red-listed* marbled murrelet, northern sea lion, killer whale and sea otter. *Blue-listed* gray whale, Dolly Varden and cutthroat trout. *Yellow-listed specie of conservation concern (S4)* coho salmon. *Blue-listed* plant California wax myrtle that only occurs in the Tofino-Ucluelet region.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Ecosystem-level studies of undisturbed temperate rainforest watersheds, and rare and endangered species

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☒	Marine, remote experience
destination	☒	Kayaking destination, coastal and forest hiking
travel corridor	☒	Kayak route from Tofino to Hot Springs Cove
local recreation	☐	Not as significant
Special Opportunities	☒	Gray whale, other marine mammal and sea bird viewing
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Natural and cultural values

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☒	Post contact history; settlement patterns
Special Feature	☒	First Nations; village, gathering site, fortified and burial sites

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☒	Part of Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas in Clayoquot Sound
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☒	Covered by the Interim Measurements Extension Agreement with the Central Regional Board
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	Adjacent forestry development
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Interim Measures Extension Agreement; Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel Watershed Reserve Plans; identified for protection in the 1993 Clayoquot Sound Land Use Decision. Marine Protected Areas Strategy.

Area: 7,113.3 hectares (4,144.5 ha upland; 2,969.8 ha foreshore)

Date of establishment: July 12, 1995

Zoning Map - Flores Island Provincial Park

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Natural Environment
Protected Area Boundary

0 2
km

Produced in Feb 2003 for Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection by MSRM, Decision Support Services

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